

Sunday Worship Services at 9am

In-Person in the Sanctuary, Live Online

(YouTube, Facebook, reedleymbc.org)

On Demand after 1pm on Monday

Children's Church

Ages 3 through 1st Grade

Fellowship on the Green at 10:20am

Adult and Children's Classes at 10:40am

SCAN TO CONNECT WITH US ON OUR DIGITAL
CONNECTION FORM
WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!



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Charlie Rivoire, Business Manager	charlie@reedleymbc.org

REEDLEY MENNONITE BRETHERN CHURCH

December 2021

the
Gift of
Jesus



*"... for I am gentle and lowly in heart..." -
Matthew 11:29*



Sunday Morning @ 9 AM

Online live @ 9 AM | On Demand after 1 PM on Monday

Sunday classes for all ages @ 10:40am



"...pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."
Luke 10:2

Christmas eve
Candlelight
SERVICE
December 24th at 5:30pm
(no childcare during the service)

RMBC PRESENTS THE
CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
tonight at 5:30!

Save the Date

Dec 12	3rd Sunday of Advent - Today!	9am
Dec 12	Children's Program - Today!	5:30pm
Dec 13	Chapter One School Christmas Program	7pm
Dec 17&18	Choir Christmas Program	7pm
Dec 19	4th Sunday of Advent, Tute Bags	9am
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	5:30pm
Dec 26	Sunday Morning Service, no Sunday School	9am
Jan 2	Sunday Morning Service, no Sunday School	9am

*"A thrill of HOPE
the weary world rejoices"*

JH & HS
Christmas Party
\$5 per student
December 15th 5:30 - 8:30pm
friends are free

CHRISTMAS CHOIR PROGRAM
THE Miracle OF Christmas WORSHIP HIS MAJESTY
December 17 & 18 at 7pm
REFRESHMENTS IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

GUADALAJARA
MEXICO MISSION TRIP
APPLICATIONS DUE **TODAY** DEC 12TH

HARTLAND
PRETEEN Feb. 4-6
JR HIGH Feb. 11-13
winter camp 2022
100%
Mark 12:30

Year End Giving

Thank you for your continued faithful giving to the mission and ministries of RMBC. As we glorify God, grow together, and go with the gospel to our world, we're thankful for the part you play. With 2021 coming to an end, would you please consider a generous, tax-deductible gift to RMBC's General Fund so we can continue to advance God's kingdom in Reedley and beyond.

For more details on these or additional RMBC Ministries: check the App, Website, or contact the church office at (559) 638-8123. Further details can also be found in today's Journal.





RMBC JOURNAL

REEDLEY MENNONITE BROTHERS CHURCH

Welcome

Welcome to Reedley MB. We're pleased to have you join us today for our worship service. It's our prayer that you will meet the living God in this place as we hear from the Word of God. We are here to **GLORIFY** God, **GROW** together as equipped disciples of Jesus Christ, and **GO** proclaiming His gospel to all. If you have questions, please ask, check our app, scan the digital QR code on the back of the Bulletin, or stop by The Welcome Center on our main lawn.
Malcolm Light, Senior Pastor

Sermon Materials

Each week, Pastor Malcolm sends out sermon materials ahead of Sunday's sermon. You can find them on our App or if you'd like to receive these in your email, please contact the Church Office.

Upcoming Events

We have upcoming events! Don't miss out: check the RMBC Website, App, and online Bulletin.

Contact Details

Office: 559-638-8123
Email: kelly@reedleymbc.org
Website: www.reedleymbc.org
Address: 1362 L Street
Reedley, CA 93654

WORSHIP TODAY

Sunday - December 12, 2021

We all need comfort in the trials, hurts, pains, and stresses of life. Jesus shares our need for comfort from His heart to ours, while also teaching us that God wastes nothing in our lives. Our text will be 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. We encourage you to bring a friend with you to worship or invite a friend to join you online for worship!

Advent Candlelighters for this week is Molly Heinrichs, Lauren Burkett, and Ryland Knaak.

If you are visiting with us today we encourage you to download our app (search: reedleymbc), visit our website (reedleymbc.org), or visit our Welcome Center where you can get more information and a gift.

Join the 5 Day Bible Reading Challenge!

This week's passages: Week 50

Day 1: Nehemiah 10-13; Revelation 8

Day 2: Malachi; Psalm 2; Revelation 9

Day 3: Job 1-3; Psalm 29; Revelation 10

Day 4: Job 4-7; Psalm 99; Revelation 11

Day 5: Job 8-11; Revelation 12

OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES

Prayer Line - Would you like to receive our daily Prayer Line? You can via email, or through our App. Please contact the Church Office.

Sunday Morning Prayer - Meets in Pastor Malcolm's office at 8:15am.

Wednesday Morning Prayer - Meets at 6:30am in the Fellowship Hall. Come and join us as we seek the Lord for our church, our community, and our world.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Missionary of the Week: **Edd and Ingrid Russell** serving with Multiply in Thailand. Pray for the Christmas celebrations being held this month. Christmas is a particularly powerful time of year to be able to share the gospel with others. Edd and Ingrid rejoice that many will experience Christmas this year knowing the truth of Jesus in it. Continue to pray for their house church meetings each week.

Mexico Mission Trip - today is the last day to turn in your application for the trip. Contact Pastor Joel if you desire to submit your application but need more time to turn it in.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stan and Darlene Huebert would like to thank the RMBC families for all the prayers offered to God when Stan was in the hospital. *The cards, phone calls, and personal words of encouragement are greatly appreciated. Thank you. May God bless you all.*

The rosebud is to announce the birth of a son, **Blake Matthew Harder**, born December 5 to Matt & Marie Harder.

Our condolence is extended to **Larry Horn and family** on the death of his wife Jackie. Her Memorial Service will be Tuesday, December 21, at 2pm at RMBC.

STEWARDSHIP

11/21/2021 - Attendance 548
YTD Goal \$510,973
YTD Deficit \$110,908

GIVING @ RMBC

- Text reedleymbc to 1-888-364-4483
- reedleymbc.org > Give
- RMBC App > Giving
- U S Postal Service
- Office, M-F, 8:30-5pm

OPPORTUNITIES

Part Time Custodian needed at RMBC: This employee performs a variety of general custodial and light grounds keeping work in the care and maintenance of the church campus' buildings and grounds. Under the direction of the Business Manager and Custodial Lead, the Custodian performs a variety of semi-skilled and skilled work in the maintenance of buildings, grounds, and equipment. The position requires two days per week with additional opportunities available.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Children's Christmas Program will be TODAY!, December 12, at 5:30pm. We will have a rehearsal on Saturday morning December 11th at 9am.

Nursery is available for children birth through Age 2 in the Children's Center.

Children's Church is available for kids 3 years old - 1st grade. Children meet in the breezeway when dismissed from the service. Children's Church is located in the Children's Center in the Seashore Room.

Sunday School - Age 3 through 4th grade meet in the Children's Center; 5th & 6th grade are upstairs in the Student Center at 10:40am (**please don't send them to Sunday School until 10:35am**) Check in children prior to church service in the breezeway or after service in the lobby of the Children's Center. Children ages 3-4th grade will need to be picked up from their classrooms in the Children's Center instead of the playground. Please PROMPTLY pick up your children after Sunday School and have your parent check-in tag with you.

Pre-Teen Winter Camp at Hartland will be February 4-6th for 4th-6th graders. Space is limited. Sign up today!

RMBC COLLEGE & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Sunday School: meet in room 202 in the Student Center.

Sunday Night: meet in room 200 in the Student Center.

Christmas Party: watch for info about our upcoming annual Christmas Party. We are considering December 19th but not confirmed yet. Start looking for a fun White Elephant Gift for the gift exchange.

MEN'S MINISTRY

Forged Bible Study: Tuesdays, 6-7am in SC 100

Cross Trainers Basketball: Wed., 7pm, Immanuel

Men's Group: Thursdays at noon in the Student Center

Pickleball: Thursdays at 7pm, at the RMBC Court

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

MOMS End of Year Schedule - Meet in SC 200 at 9am;
December 2 - Fellowship with guest speaker Rachel Triguero

December 9 - Bible Study "Truthfilled"

December 16 - Christmas Party

WOW 2021 - Community Bible Study Tuesdays, 9-11am in the Fellowship Hall.

Women's Study - Wednesday nights at 6:45pm in EC 205

OTHER MINISTRY

Bilingual Class meets Wednesday nights in EC 209 at 7pm.

College & Young Adults meet on Sunday nights from 6-9pm upstairs in the Student Center.

ROOTED STUDENT MINISTRIES

Sunday School - Junior High meets in the Student Center upstairs in SC200. Vince Balakian is teaching through the Old Testament. **High School** meets downstairs in the Student Center in SC100. The students are studying the miracles and parables of Jesus in the Gospels.

Rooted Christmas Party - All 7-12th graders are invited to our end of year party on Wednesday, December 15th, 5:30-8:30pm. Dinner will be served at 5:30pm followed by games and Christmas activities. The cost is \$5 per student and the money will go toward our designated missions fundraiser for the season. Bring non-RMBC friends for free.

Rooted Junior High Winter Camp at Hartland

Junior High Students are going to Hartland Winter Camp, February 11-13th. Sign up on the App or webpage. A \$50 deposit is required for official registration. The cost for camp this year is \$207. Scholarships are available for those with financial need.

Rooted High School Winter Camp at Hume

High school students are going to Hume Winter Camp, February 25-27. Register today on the App or webpage. A \$50 deposit is required to secure registration. The total cost is \$224. Scholarships are available for those with financial need.

Contact joel@reedleymbc.org for more information on Student Ministry



God of All Comfort 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

We know God's promises best when we are in direst need of them. It's one thing to quote, as I did a few weeks ago, Psalm 34:18, "*The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.*" But when my spirit has been crushed, when I am holding the shattered pieces of my hearts; when I can't fix, can't make sense of, when I am face to face with the howling gale of a storm, of suffering, of an affliction in my life – a broken marriage, a wayward child, an unexpected death, an unwelcome disease – it's then that God's promise to be near to the brokenhearted and saving of those crushed in spirit moves from the theoretical and abstract to the concrete and real. We know God's promises best when we are in direst need of them.

As we continue to look at the heart of our Savior in this season of Advent, that Jesus is gentle and lowly of heart, I want to pause today and look at God the Father. As Dane Ortlund points out in the book, *Gentle and Lowly*, we often look at God the Father as being harsh or distant, less inclined to love than Jesus, God the Son. In some way we can tend to look at them as a yin and yang to one another, the Son being the epitome of love in order to balance out the wrath of the Father. What we miss though is that God the Father is just as consumed with love for His people as God the Son is because they are of one mind and one heart in seeing that salvation would come to this broken and sin-sick world. Our text today, 2 Corinthians 1:3-5, makes this interrelationship of merciful love for human beings from God the Father and God the Son clear.

In our day, we often have an allergic reaction to difficulties, challenges, suffering, and affliction in our lives. We come at life, an especially at Christian life as though there should be no problems, no struggles, no afflictions, no hardships. But Jesus is clear in John 16:33, "*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart, I have overcome the world.*" This teaches us that **God doesn't always remove afflictions; however, He does comfort with enduring strength.** This means, that while the affliction may not be removed, God will sustain us, strengthen us, as Jesus will say in chapter 12 of 2 Corinthians, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*"

I keep using this word affliction, and I do so because it's in our text. But I want to define what I mean. An affliction is something that causes pain or suffering. For example, when I ran my toe into the corner of my bed the other night, I was afflicted. Another example would be a few nights ago we had some fabulous tamales, and my dear wife was afflicted by my gaseous enjoyment a little later that evening. All this to say, **afflictions can be external distresses and internal torments.** They can come from the outside and from the inside. Paul, the author of 2 Corinthians says as much in 1:8, "*For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death.*" And again in 4:8, "*We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.*" Paul is just like us, no stranger to affliction, to pain and suffering, and recognizes that affliction has multiple sources.

But this is where we need to pay attention and learn from what Paul is saying in the opening verse of 2 Corinthians, because God the Father's heart towards us, is just as **Jesus's heart towards us as His people, it is to comfort us IN affliction and suffering.** God is, as we see in 2 Corinthians 1:3, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, and because of that we have a key truth to unpack today, and that key truth is this – **God wastes nothing.** God wastes nothing. God is not about to waste a time of suffering or pain or affliction that comes into our lives. Why? Well, this now comes full circle, because we know God's promises best when we are in direst need of them. In other words, our faith in Christ becomes more real, more finely tuned, more concrete and living as we learn to trust and depend on God in all things. Look again at 2 Corinthians 1:9, Paul is talking about the afflictions he has been experiencing and again says, "*Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But, that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.*" Never forget that God will not waste your suffering, God

will not waste your affliction, God will not waste your tears or trials, He will use them to draw us closer to Himself, and to mold us more into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And this alone is to be a comfort to us. Because it helps us to see that **suffering and affliction is not alien to faithful commitment to Christ**. Much of what Paul is talking about in 2 Corinthians has to do with the suffering and affliction he has received as a result of being a minister of the gospel of Christ. And to be sure, Jesus as well teaches us that, *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”* Persecution, affliction, and suffering are simply a part of what it means to be a follower of Jesus, and it is not alien to faithful commitment to Christ.

So what does Paul say to us about the heart of God in bringing comfort to His people? **First, God is in control of our afflictions and suffering**. Verse 3, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”*. This may seem like a simple opening, but Paul is not idly using words here. He speaks of God as Father, reminding us as Jesus does that God in Christ has restored an intimacy of relationship with God previously unknown. He is Father, and the birthright of every Christian is to refer to God as their own Heavenly Father. But notice also that the God who is blessed is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Calling Jesus lord is a bit of a throw away comment in our day. We will quickly say Jesus is our lord and savior, but when pressed as to what that means, many of us will stumble over a meaning or resort simply to vague comments about Jesus taking the wheel. But Jesus being Lord means that He is in control. And that is to be a comfort to us that we do not live in a world in which God is surprised or taken aback by the afflictions and sufferings that come into our lives. It is how we can truly believe Romans 8:28, *“... that for those who love God all things work together for good”*, not because our suffering or affliction or hardship itself is good, but because God is in control and we are not abandoned in our affliction.

A second way God brings us comfort we find at the end of verse 3, God is the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; meaning, **the comfort we receive itself comes from God**. Paul says in verse 4 that, *“[God] comforts us in all our affliction”*. This is the reason for Paul’s praise and thanksgiving to God. For us, the word “comfort” may imply emotional relief and a sense of well-being, physical ease, satisfaction, and freedom from pain and anxiety. Many in our culture worship the cult and at the altar of comfort in a self-centered search for ease, but it lasts for only a moment and never fully satisfies. The comfort that Paul has in mind has nothing to do with a languorous feeling of contentment. It is not some tranquilizing dose of grace that only dulls pains but a stiffening agent that fortifies one in heart, mind, and soul. Comfort relates to encouragement, help, exhortation. God’s comfort strengthens weak knees and sustains sagging spirits so that one faces the troubles of life with unbending resolve and unending assurance. This is comfort that comes from God, a comfort to move us forward, to move us into His arms, to drive us into His presence. All human comfort is vain and short.” Not so with God’s comfort; it takes many forms but can always match the suffering. God can deliver us *“out of affliction”* or encourage us *“in affliction”* so that we can endure it

And this is because, as Christians, we understand that afflictions and suffering serve a dual purpose. **First, to deepen our faith rather than dampen it**. Christianity does not profess to cure suffering but does profess to use it. Again, we know God’s promises best when we are in direst need of them. Affliction and suffering are a faith builder, they teach us that reliance on ourselves will be insufficient for life. That we are not nearly as in control as we want to believe, that we need to give ourselves over to the One, give ourselves over to the God who indeed sees the end from the beginning and is the sovereign over all things. Affliction and suffering deepens our faith as we learn to surrender ourselves to Christ and truly His lordship, His control in our lives. You’ll notice the Bible never spends time trying to figure out why do bad things happen to good people. Joseph gives us insight into this question when he says to his brothers, *“What you intended for evil, God intended for good.”* Suffering should not lead us to doubt our faith, but to confirm our faith.

And this leads us to the second purpose of affliction and suffering in our lives. **God's comfort of us serves the purpose of preparing us to comfort others.** Look at verse 4, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*" Church, God's comfort is not intended to stop with us. God always gives a surplus, and God intends it to overflow to others. It is given not just to make us feel better but to bolster us for the task of fortifying others to face suffering. God does not comfort us to make us comfortable but to make us comforters. I saw this picture online the other day I thought appropriately conveyed this truth (**show picture**). God wastes nothing. Why? Because our God loves us enough to not leave us in our suffering, but to comfort us, to strengthen us, to develop our faith in Him. And beyond that, to then use our suffering, to use our afflictions, to be able to be a comfort to others.

How do we apply this to our lives? We do so as we both experience and emanate, or share, God's comfort with others.

We experience God's comfort as Christians express care to one another. Suffering becomes an unbearable burden when we feel alone and abandoned. Simply being present with someone in the suffering or affliction, perhaps just acknowledging that it hurts, expresses care for that person. There is tremendous power in praying with, not just for, but with a person who is experiencing some kind of affliction. Perhaps God has comforted you in a particular pain a friend of loved one is now going through. Acknowledge it, be with them, care for them, comfort them as you were comforted by others and by the God.

We also experience God's comfort by caring for others even when we are amid our own suffering. Sometimes the sudden onslaught of affliction may tempt one to retreat into a shell, to shut oneself off from others. The suffering, however, then becomes purposeless. Those who focus only on themselves are the most miserable of people. The persons who turn their pain to helping others can redirect and conquer that pain. Paul knew how to encourage because he knew what it was like to be discouraged. He knew how to comfort because he knew what it was like to feel unbearably crushed. He knew how to console others because he knew what it was like to be at the end of his tether. The difference is that he knows who holds the other end of the tether—God.

And finally, we experience God's comfort by witnessing its power in the lives of others. The testimony of God's grace in one's life is a forceful reminder to others of God's ability and willingness to provide the grace and strength they need.

Jesus had made room in His heart for us, for our suffering and affliction, our pains and hurts, our hardships and adversities. As He has made room in His heart to comfort us, will you make room in your heart to be used by Him to be an instrument that the God of all comfort will use to be a comfort to others?

God of All Comfort
2 Corinthians 1:3-5

Pastor Malcolm
December 12, 2021

When We Need God's Comfort

We know God's promises _____ when we are in _____ need of them

God doesn't always _____ afflictions; God does comfort with _____

strength Afflictions can be _____ distresses and _____ torments

Jesus' heart towards us as His people is to _____ us _____ affliction and suffering

Key Truth: God _____

The Comfort of God for Sufferers

Suffering and affliction _____ not alien to faithful commitment to Christ

God is in _____ of our afflictions and suffering

The comfort we receive _____ from God

Afflictions and suffering serve to _____ our faith rather than _____ it

God's comfort serves the purpose of _____ us to comfort others

Experiencing and Emanating God's Comfort

We experience God's comfort as Christians express their _____ to one another

We experience God's comfort by _____ for others, even _____ suffering

We experience God's comfort as we _____ it's power in the lives of others

John preached the good news.

Ages 3+

December 12, 2021 • Luke 3:7-18

John Prepares the Way

John preached to the crowd.
He told them to bear fruit for God.

Trace the fruit.

joy

kindness

patience

gentleness

self-control

goodness

love

peace

faithfulness

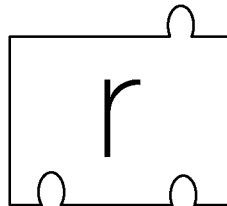
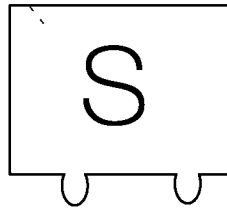
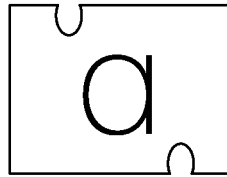
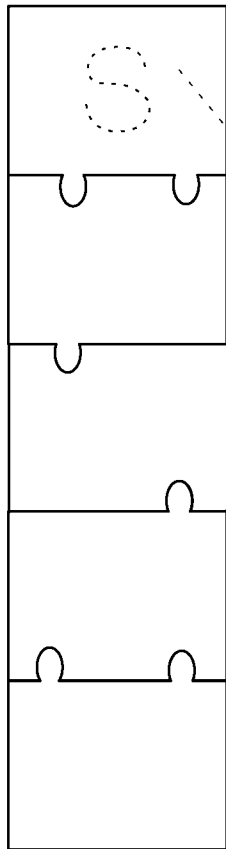
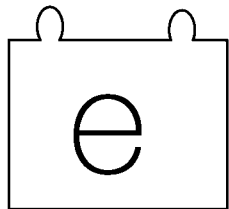
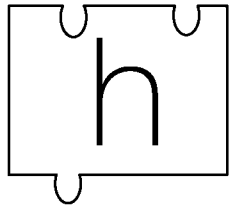


Enter your **SECRET CODE** to unlock games @
games.childrensbulletins.com

SECRET CODE
VC8888

John said, "Share what you have."

Match the puzzle pieces and write the letters.



John also told the soldiers and tax collectors,
"Be fair. Be content with your pay."

Match the pictures.

